



John Surtees Drives the Ferrari FF in the 2015 Beaujolais Run®



Over 30 crews participated in this year's Beaujolais Run® which was flagged off by John Surtees from the Royal Automobile Club, Woodcote Park, Epsom on Monday 16th November.

The Beaujolais Run® was initially a race to get the first bottle of the new season's Beaujolais wine back to England; it has taken place 45 times since its inception in 1970. Following the death of his son in 2009 John Surtees OBE became patron, and sponsorship funds raised by participants is donated to the Henry Surtees Foundation.

The Beaujolais Run® is a navigational trail through a cryptic checkpoint course that begins in the UK and ends in Burgundy, France. It is designed to give a level playing field for all types of vehicles, be they classic cars, supercars, Classic Cars, off-roaders, daily drivers and/or touring motorcycles of any age. With navigation classes for 'maps only' and 'any assistance' (satellite navigation, etc.).

The four day rally prides itself on its unique, unprecedented access to chateaux, historic battle fields, famous vineyards and encounters at world renowned motor racing circuits, plus fantastic driving through Belgium and France and this year was no exception. The 1200 mile rally also visited the diamond city of Antwerp (a location favoured by Napoleon), visiting the Battle of Waterloo site. They were guest of the Mayor of Beaujolais for the celebrations of the release of the 2015 Nouveau vintage. All the participants were then driven to the chateau and home of the Taittinger Champagne family in Reims, where they were able to enjoy a superb dinner accompanied by a champagne from the Taittinger cellars chosen for each course.

Two and four-wheeled World Champion, and Patron of the Beaujolais Run® - John Surtees OBE joined the run participants in Reims on Thursday 19th November driving the Ferrari FF after having seen them off at the start at RAC Woodcote Park. He was pictured loading a case of this year's Beaujolais Nouveau in a very wet pit lane at Reims (Gueux Circuit) in amongst meeting local fans.

John Surtees said “it was a delight to join the participants on the Beaujolais Run, and we are grateful to the Taittinger family for their hospitality, we all swapped the wheel for a coach that night, as the champagne was flowing generously!”

Guest speaker Malcolm Barber, of Bonhams joined the dinner and shared stories of his involvement in some fantastic sales that he was involved with, including that of a Ferrari 250GTO that John was very conversant with, having raced one on numerous occasions.

John Surtees continued “I enjoyed visiting the start line of the old Reims Circuit; it holds many memories to me of racing both in sports cars and F1 cars. I met with French motor racing enthusiasts and got to hear about the terrific restoration work that they are carrying out to preserve the historic track and pit buildings. Back on the open road, I really had to resist temptation driving the FF, it's so responsive, and with those wonderful French roads, no traffic, and a 12 cylinder engine – the temptation was difficult”.

The Run's participants had plenty of fun and frustration on route as they tried to cover the course in the shortest distance to win the coveted 'P2' position on the following year's start line. P1 is reserved for the highest fundraising team. All crews headed for deepest Burgundy and return, aiming to be the first that brings back the Beaujolais after its midnight release.

The Beaujolais Run® 2015 was generously supported by a number of key partners, including Partridge and Co., Champagne Taittinger, Ssangyong, Louise Latour, Rose and White Tailoring, The Review and Screaming Eagles, as well as Bentley Motors, Ferrari North Europe, Jaguar Cars and Artemis.

Notes to Editors:

The Beaujolais Run® Background:

In 1970 at the Hotel Maritones, Joseph Berkman and Clement Freud were sharing a dinner of Coq au Vin. Owner of eight London restaurants, Berkman also ran his own wine distribution company and wrote a weekly column. Clement Freud was Director of the London Playboy Club, a respectable Member of Parliament and a wine correspondent. As bottle succeeded bottle that night, the germ of an idea took shape. Sometime after midnight, they roared away from Romanèche with several cases of 1970 Beaujolais in the back of each car, having challenged each other to be the first to get their cases back to London.

Fast-forward to 2006, and the first Beaujolais Run® in its refreshed, modern format took place, starting from the historic Goodwood location, and raising significant sums for charity. Every November since, the Run has headed to Beaujolais via some spectacular driving roads, breath-taking scenery and enthralling experiences, involving some of the finest wine, Champagne and food France has to offer. Since 2006, The Beaujolais Run® has raised more than £700,000 for charity.

The Henry Surtees Foundation:

The Henry Surtees Foundation assists people with brain or physical injuries caused by accident to return to community living by the provision of support for equipment and facilities; advance young people in life by helping them to develop their skills, capacities and capabilities so that they can participate in society as independent, mature and responsible individuals and advance their education and relieve unemployment.